4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

a loosely defined, laterally oriented kindred; the nation-state (mentioned not for formal reasons, but because it actually is psychologically important); and to a lesser extent, the village monastery and school. Of these five institutions, the nuclear family is the principal focus of psychological concern, beyond the individual himself. Otherwise, there are in Bang Chan no castes, age-grade societies, occupational groups (other than the family), neighborhood groups, or groups expressive of village solidarity (such as councils or governing boards) which might impose a sense of obligation on the villagers, or to whose norms or functions the villagers might have to conform.[6] Bang Chaners do not have to contribute their labor to their community, serve as village guards, contend with the dictates of village elders, or even actively coöperate with fellow villagers.

All villagers have additional relationships of varying degrees of intimacy both within and without the community, but these are dyadic, not group, relationships based on implicit expectations of mutual benefit. Such contacts are in nature primarily idiosyncratic (friends), transient (reciprocal work groups, gambling and drinking partners), or contractual (as opposed to affective or kin determined: vendors, landlords, debtors, rice millers, employers, and doctors). It is important to recognize that if some of these latter relationships take on positive affective qualities, they may also assume some of the forms and feelings of kinship. Thus, a young man who is taken on as a hired hand by a family frequently ceases to be considered an "employee" and becomes instead an "adopted son." (This type of *gemeinschaft* relationship, contrary perhaps to theoretical expectations, is also characteristic of many occupational situations in Bangkok.) In a similar vein, the terms for older sibling (*phii*), elder uncle (*lung*), and elder aunt (*paa*) are used as terms of address and reference between individuals who are obviously not related to each other, but who wish to mark overtly their fondness and respect for one another. The use of these

[6] There are two minor exceptions to this generalization: (1) a monastery lay committee whose functions are limited to the secular tasks of monastery administration, and membership in which brings prestige and Buddhist merit to a few selected members of the community; and (2) reciprocal work groups organized for and limited to rice transplanting and harvesting, membership in which is completely voluntary and a matter of mutual convenience (Janlekha 1955). Careful accounts are kept as to how much labor is contributed by each participating family, and responsibility for remitting labor received lies with the individual participant, not the group.

It must be noted that the monastery and its cadre of relatively permanent monks, although the very institution that defines the existence of "the village of Bang Chan," is not from the point of view of its clientele primarily a unit representative of village cohesiveness. It is first and foremost a Buddhist monastery where one may make merit and only secondarily *the Bang Chan* Monastery. Several members of the community patronize other monasteries, and several Bang Chan monks come from other locales. The keen sense of individual obligation that villagers feel toward their monastery could be directed toward any monastery.